

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Connecticut	
COUNTY: Hartford	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Old Newgate Prison and Copper Mine

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Newgate Prison (Simsbury Mine)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Newgate Road

CITY OR TOWN:
East Granby

STATE: **Connecticut** CODE: COUNTY: **Hartford** CODE:

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	Public Acquisition:	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Yes:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> In Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious			
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: **William J. Morris, Director**

State of Connecticut - Connecticut Historical Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: **54 Pratt Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Hartford** STATE: **Connecticut** CODE:

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Town Hall**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **East Granby** STATE: **Connecticut** CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Connecticut Historic Structures & Landmarks Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1966** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **Connecticut Historical Commission**

STREET AND NUMBER: **54 Pratt Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Hartford** STATE: **Connecticut** CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

96

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The State Historic Site consists of about five acres of land, with the mine, the wall, and the buildings which formerly constituted the prison. The structures, five in number, include a large building on the north side, 150 by 35 feet, of one and two stories, used in the early 19th century as a smith and cooper's shop; a brick house in the center, formerly occupied by the prisoner keeper and guards; on the south side, a edifice 100 by 27 feet, of two stories, formerly occupied by the cabinet, wagon, and shoemaker shops, together with the prison kitchen, and a four story building 62 by 28 feet, erected for a treadmill and cell block, all within the walls and substantially built of brick and stone. These buildings are all in a ruined state.

The mine, which was used as the Revolutionary War period prison, consists of a vertical shaft sunk into the western side of Talcott Mountain. A number of additional shafts were also sunk, which were subsequently used as ventilation shafts and wells. Horizontal tunneling from the base of the main shaft created a series of interconnected caverns or tunnels each about five feet high, in which the prisoners were housed, and which exist to the present time. Since the mine opened in 1707 the only access has been a ladder attached to the side of a vertical shaft more than 20 feet deep. It was by this means that prisoners and guards entered and left "Hell," as the shaft and tunnels were known in Revolutionary times.

Renovation of New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine is now underway. The Connecticut Historical Commission plans to open the 265 year-old mine for public visitation in the spring of 1972. The current renovation project includes drilling a 75-foot slanting tunnel to enable visitors to enter the mine by descending a staircase. An original shaft will also be fitted with a circular staircase to be used as an emergency exit. Other phases of the project include construction of a gatehouse-reception center, stabilization of the ruins of an above-ground, four-story cell block, the removal of non-historic structures now on the property, and exterior restoration and interior renovation of the central guardhouse to hold a historical-interpretive museum. When completed, the points of interest will also include a tour of the underground cells in the old copper mine.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1775-1827

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Used from 1775 to 1782 as a prison for British soldiers, Tories, and other political offenders, New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine was undoubtedly the most horrible prison in the British North American colonies. From 1776 to 1827 New-Gate also served as Connecticut's first State Prison. The mine and the tunnels in which the Revolutionary prisoners were incarcerated deep underground have survived virtually intact. The State Prison buildings and wall, erected above ground in the period 1790-1802, still stand as extensive ruins.

History

Authorized by town meeting in 1705, the Copper Hill Mines, variously called the Granby Copper Mines and the Simsbury Mines, were chartered in 1707 and worked until about 1745. This is believed to be the first operating copper mine in the British North American colonies. In 1773 the mine was purchased by the Colony of Connecticut and put to use as a prison. During the War for Independence the mine was used as a place of confinement for Tories and prisoners of war. During this era the prisoners were largely housed underground and from 1775 to 1778 they were employed to work the mine, but when this venture proved unprofitable the mining effort was abandoned. Most of the existing stone and brick buildings were built in the period 1790 to 1802 and the great wall enclosing the prison was erected in 1802. New-Gate Prison was abandoned in 1827, when the new State Prison was opened at Wethersfield.

The mines were briefly revived in 1830-37 and again in 1855-57. Since that time the property has passed between private and public ownership on a number of occasions. For a number of years in the 20th century the main prison building was used as a dance hall and recreation center. Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine was acquired by the Connecticut Historical Commission in October 1968 and the property is undergoing an extensive program of restoration and stabilization as a State Historic site.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Richard H. Phelps, Newgate of Connecticut (Hartford, 1844)

Noah H. Phelps, History of Simsbury, Granby, and Canton (Hartford, 1845)

O. F. Lewis, The Development of American Prisons and Prison Customs (New York, 1922).

Connecticut, A Guide to Its Roads, Lore, and People (American Guide Series) (Boston, 1938), 499.

Claude H. Van Tyne, The Loyalists in the American Revolution (Gloucester, Mass., 1959), 235-237.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	41° 57' 43"	72° 44' 47"		41 57 43	72 44 44	
NE	41° 57' 43"	72° 44' 45"				
SE	41° 57' 42"	72° 44' 44"				
SW	41° 57' 42"	72° 44' 46"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **five (5) acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: **Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service** DATE: **1/4/72**

STREET AND NUMBER:
801 - 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington 20006** STATE: **D.C.** CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ <i>Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ <i>Keeper of The National Register</i></p> <p>Date _____</p>
--	---

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

War Office (of Governor
Jonathan Trumbull) *(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE	
Connecticut	
COUNTY	
New London	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

2

War Office
(Capt. Joseph Trumbull Store and
office)

8. Significance (Continued)

moved a second time to its present location in 1891. Additional restoration work was carried out on the War Office in 1911, 1930, and 1960.